

REINCARNATION

VOL. VI.

CHICAGO, MARCH-APRIL, 1921

No. 2

MATERIALISM IN PHILOSOPHY

Sound views of life make the matrix of practical existence. It was Germany's false philosophy that caused her ruin and the agony of the world. The philosophy of a nation or of a civilization is, in many respects, more potent than any agency except karma in determining its happenings, its prosperity and its length of days.

While a strong spirit of idealism was aroused among the allies during the war, there was, by the very necessity of the case, a very great reaction afterward. The allies who had vied with one another during the war in expressing the lofty nature of their notions of ideality, disgracefully contended with one another, after its conclusion, for the spoils of victory.

But this consequence of massive consciousness movement from a higher to a lower range of action was comparatively trivial, if viewed from certain vantage-grounds, even though it concerned the allotment of almost the whole of Africa and the vast theaters of entire ancient civilizations in Asia to England and the consignment of fair empires to France, together with the stupid dismemberment of Austria and Hungary.

Of real menace to the very life of humanity through the jeopardizing of its foremost phase of civilization is the vigorous acceptance of a false, materialistic philosophy by some of the allies, especially by America. For all about us we see everywhere the tendency to condone the policy of territorial seizure and to live strongly prepared forever even when the possibilities of war seem almost to have reached their lowest limit.

But worst of all is the present avowal of the theory of the immediately practical, and the simultaneous debasement of the idea that learning is a worthy possession for its own sake. How rarely does one now find young men struggling first of all for freedom to live lives consecrated to culture which is of the very essence of our civilization. Success in the life of outer action, in the opinion of most successful Americans, should reward itself by more success in outer life and not by utilizing the opportunity to turn to the life of inner activity.

It would seem that, at the present time, philosophy has denied her birthright and, conquered and writhing under the lash, is willing to assert her own ineptitude, willing to cry "Peccavi" and

to asseverate that she has no more truths to discover by the immediate study of her own spirit. Philosophy to-day must abjectly leave her throne of reason studying reason, and come into the objective world for starting-points there, to find the lowest of all criteria by which to decide philosophic values—the criteria of practical utility to the personality. It is no longer a philosophical necessity to find philosophic standards of value in the squaring of the truth with absolute Truth, as nearly as the thinker can see it. It is now the practice to gauge the values of philosophic data by their usefulness in the every-day round of personal life. The self-styled philosophers who have adopted such methods set aside the well-known fact that the every-day life of man in any age, though reflecting the universal life, reflects it with varying emphasis upon the phases of the reflecting personality.

So we find a new philosophic book on God, starting out with "the pragmatic approach," audaciously asserting that the value of the God-tenet depends upon its usefulness for us. Of what value is the idea of God to us!

With this bathos of philosophy at the heart of our American life of thought, what philosophic ideas shall we expect the voting or rifle-bearing citizen to apply when he aids in upbuilding his country's ideals or defends her abroad?

He must mould his universities in utilitarianism; he must defend his country as the soil from which he gains his bread. We would have him fashion his schools as the seats of divine philosophy and the humanities first and of the applied arts secondarily; there is abundant opportunity

for both, but the correct theoretic order of succession is imperative. He would defend his country as the seat of his worship of God and not as the place where he earned his money.

The emptying of our universities into European regiments has had its legitimate result,—it has given us, for the moment, a utilitarian outlook, Our young men—and women, too, if you please,—must learn Spanish to help get South American trade! Greek and Latin are no longer of value! Laborious, fusty translators have long ago extracted all the honey from those combs! A nearby college pays a Professor of Greek to teach classes in Greek from the translations into English to be purchased at the book shops!

Of course the utilitarian fashion cannot last long. Truth crushed to Earth will rise again! But the grief of it is difficult to endure. The growing generation needs proper spiritual food. It behooves all true thinkers to keep active their spiritual thought.

W. V-H.



Let us then make it our rule to watch for points of agreement rather than of disagreement, to look for pearls rather than for flaws; to try to find in our brethren qualities which we like, rather than to overemphasize those we happen to dislike.

C.W.Leadbeater in "Hidden Side of Christian Festivals."

ABUL FAZ'L'S TEMPLE INSCRIPTION

Abul Faz'l, the prime minister of Emperor Akbar, the greatest of the Mogul emperors of India, is said to have been the author of the following inscription for a temple in Kashmir:

Oh God, in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee!

Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee!

Each religion says, "Thou art one, without equal."

If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer, and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love of Thee.

Sometimes I frequent the Christian Cloister, and sometimes the mosque.

But it is Thou whom I search from temple to temple.

Thy elect have no dealings with heresy or orthodoxy, for neither of them stand behind the screen of Thy truth.

Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox.

But the dust of the rose-petal to the heart of the perfume seller.

LOGIC VERSUS SENTIMENT

Understand:—*to know*, (Dictionary).

When you say, "I know, I understand," *do you know* or do you just think that you know? Sentiment is not logic nor is a personal opinion always reasonable if the opinion you express is an echo of your neighbor or merely the re-statement of a printed page. If you are about to make a positive statement about something, stop to consider if you are in possession of facts.

Very few people are absolutely correct in their statements about anything, hence the newspapers are full of items concerning the antagonism of people,—antagonism that takes a thousand ways to assert itself. We, as a so-called educated people, are entirely too careless in our everyday speech. If we took more time to think we would not be so likely to make absurd and harmful statements about everything, nor would we be so easily deceived. I heard of a lady who taught her child to blow soap bubbles. A neighbor told of it about the village and in a few days it was said that Mrs. So-and-So smoked a pipe! Yet, we all find ourselves misrepresented because people do not tell the simple truth. They seem to think that a little exaggeration here and there improves the telling of a story—sometimes it does—but woe to the one who is misrepresented.

I heard a minister preach the same sermon three times, within three years, with slight variations. Each time he preached to the same congregation, during a vacation season. It was one of his stock sermons and I suppose he delivered it in every town he visited. The part that an-

noyed me was the way he told a story of a street urchin and every year he related the story he said that "it happened the other day in Philadelphia." I do not believe he realized he told an untruth, but the third time he related the story in the same town it was three years after the event happened,—if it ever did happen. Well, the people woke up and he never preached there again.

When I was a youth I discovered that many stories were invented and told as facts to make converts in the churches, and it is true that to-day the world is flooded with propaganda representing many kinds of religion and philosophy, the said propaganda being composed of exaggerated tales and many of them running a close second to the "Arabian Nights."

When one starts out to learn truth, to tell it, and to think it, one is surprised at the difficulty on all sides.

I do not say that truth does not exist but I know from personal investigation that *many* of the wonderful cures, conversions, rescues and thrilling stories heard of everywhere are misrepresentations of truth. Another discovery I made was—the remarkable gullibility of people. They read something in a newspaper, magazine or book and tell it for a fact just because it appeals to them. An idea may appeal to us, yet it may not be a truth, even though it be re-stated for a thousand generations.

We should not tell a thing for a fact unless we know it to be so. It is better to say, "I read so-and-so," or, "I heard it," or, "I think so."

Many people do not realize how little reason they use, and, when one tries to point out the

fact they are offended; they persist in believing that sentiment and logic are the same. If you question them at any length on a statement they make, they soon realize that they are not telling facts but merely what they believe and in most instances they have never given the subject any deep thought nor read important articles to find out what they could about it; and, when they become aware that they don't know what they are talking about they are seldom brave enough to admit it but try to hide their ignorance behind an argument or else introduce other thoughts foreign to the one under discussion. It is more satisfying to quibble than to say, "I don't know." Some people think it humiliating to say, "I don't know."

Another experience of mine in my search for truth occurred while listening to people relating stories of events in their lives, or, what they thought were events, which, I discovered, was purely imagination. This is true of many so-called conversions, cures and psychic experiences. The brain or mind—I do not know which—is very tricky at times and people are easily deceived. As an illustration, people will testify in public about wonderful powers, cures, visions, dreams and conversions that are often inventions of thought which seem the more true the more they think and talk about it. Amongst the people who believe in reincarnation are many who believe themselves to be H. P. Blavatsky or some other great personage of past history.

Many so-called Christians are ready to assert a thousand times that the Lord took all desire for the world and its pleasures out of their lives

and still they are frantically trying to enjoy the world and its pleasures to the limit when they get out of church. Christian Scientists will tell you that there are no physical senses, and yet they are ready to refer in every conceivable way to their five senses to endeavor to disprove that they exist.

And I know people who are constantly telling how they love everybody and how happy they are, when, in fact, they are so "touchy" and disagreeable at times that one can feel their antagonism without receiving a word from them. If people would attend courts of law more often and hear cases tried they would realize what it means to be logical and truthful. The laws of the land and the laws of nature are not affected in the least by what you imagine or think unless you imagine the truth or think the truth and then back it up with your life—not a few feeble efforts to speak the truth but *live it* and be conscious every waking moment that you are on the level and not guessing or taking chances that you are right.

It is amusing to hear New Thought students say they are "prosperous" and "well" and "conscious of the Spirit's eternal guidance," when, in truth, they have no bank account to prove their prosperity, no healthy glow in their faces to show good health, and the fact that they take out life, accident and fire insurance and stock up their homes against the high cost of living proves that they do not rely on spiritual guidance but material protection and *they* are some of the people who *will not fight*, yet all they are and all they have is the result of somebody's strife. They are so illogical and sentimental that they would permit

the hounds of greed, ignorance and vice to devour the race. I am not criticizing religion, but just merely pointing out the need of more truth and knowledge. It is time that we arouse ourselves to a realization of our untruthfulness and begin to use some plain common sense.

Victor George Van Dalinda.



LIFE-IN-DEATH

October days . . .

Beautiful, still

With the exquisite silence of death.

Orchard and vineyard in fullness of fruitage,

Heavy with purple and russet and crimson,

Yet, the silence, palpitant, poignant.

And out of the silence, the voice of the silence,

The million little musicians of autumn

Fiddling the Masque of the Beautiful Death.

But my soul

Awake and aware

In the shrine at the heart of the silence,

Undeceived by the glamour and menace,

Above the monotonous death chant

Hears the Song of the Great Renewal.

And aflame in the Masque of the Beautiful Death

Sees Life and Change, Change and Life,

Changeless, deathless, eternal.

Helen G. Crawford.

WAYFARERS

The friendly faces that I meet
Upon the crowded city street!
I cannot know them half or all,
Yet mine each kindly face I call.

The anguished faces that I meet
Upon the surging city street!
I cannot reach their wants and woes.
I pray for them to One who knows.

The hopeless faces that I meet
Upon the hard paved city street
I only know the sparrow's fall,
Is marked by Him who loves us all.

The holy faces that I meet
Upon the common city street!
They summon me to lift my face
Toward further heights of daily grace.

Oh, faces that I daily meet
Upon Life's ever changing street!
How think you when you glance my way?
Do I add aught unto your day?

Ada Melville Shaw.

THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

"Each man is to himself absolutely the way, the truth and the life." In this wonderful cryptic statement *Light on the Path* opens the mystery of eternal life and progress to those who can see and hear. In these few words are implied the inherent divinity of man, his endless progress, his growth and perfecting. The emphatic purpose of the statement is to point out that man must be his own savior from the darkness of illusion and undevelopment. Moreover, he is his own law-giver, the maker of his own destiny, the decreer of his own fate.

Only the student of reincarnation, with his grasp of the fact that man is essentially an immortal, spiritual being, periodically coming into material expression and then withdrawing into realms of greater freedom from material limitations, can begin to understand something of the depth of meaning involved in the statement. And only with a large view of life can even he hope to know and become the way, the truth and the life.

Fundamentally man is a spark of divine life; practically he is a center of consciousness and flowing energy. The spark has been heavily veiled in matter; consciousness has been subjected to material limitations or bodies; the energies which flow through man's bodies are usually of lower order.

The 'way' spoken of is the path of evolution traced out, and still to be traced out, by the spark of divine life which has entered into material conditions. It starts from the Supreme Life and returns to it, after many spiral windings, of

different orders of magnitude. It is the pilgrimage of the prodigal son,—an allegory of the profound mystery of life.

The 'truth' is the scenery along the 'way' which is seen by the man. It is the complex group of realities which acts upon him and is acted upon by him. It is that small part of the larger universe which the man recognises as the universe.

The 'life' is the interaction between the man and his universe. The 'life' is the activity along the 'way.' It is the continual changing and growing of the 'truth' for the man. The activity takes place within the consciousness of the man.

The 'way' can be partly grasped by the abstract, or higher, mind as being independent of space and time. It is continuous and shows orderly progression all along from beginning to ending. Thus conceived, the 'way' is the man himself, in his real being.

'Life' appears to man as measured in time, but it is really measured by the growth of the 'truth' existing for the man. Man thinks of himself as existing only at the present moment, but that is only a result of the limitations under which his brain-consciousness acts. The man exists all along the 'way.' His lower consciousness, that of the personality, exists only at one point of the 'way.'

The true man is the whole of the 'way,' from beginning to ending; all the stages of evolution are his own, in fact, himself. If the man could transcend the limitations of time he would be living at all points of the 'way,' and therefore he would be the 'way.' The 'ways' are different for all men, and yet in type and principle they are similar, so that knowledge of his own 'way'

will enable a man to understand the 'ways' of others. There are many 'ways' to the Supreme.

The 'truth' consists of all things existing in the man's consciousness; he has learned to project in thought certain things outside of himself, but what exists in his consciousness is a part of him, in fact, it is himself. What men call the 'past' exists as memory and may under certain conditions become active and alive. Likewise the 'future' has real existence, and can sometimes be perceived by man in advance, before the time when it would normally affect the man. So, as all his truth exists in his consciousness in one way or another, it is really himself.

Man's 'life' is simply the activity of his consciousness, and, therefore, also an aspect of his true being. But his 'life' is not limited to the moment, or to the present incarnation,—it includes all the lives of his personalities, those of the future as well as the past.

It may be objected, man does not realise what has been stated: he is conscious only of living in the present moment. True, but that is because his consciousness has not yet expanded and developed sufficiently. He can in thought live in the memory of the past, and in the anticipation of the future. This is an indication that with developed powers he can live actually in both the past and the future. Again, in abstract thought, he can grasp the idea of eternal life,—a higher life in which all the past and all the future are included and fully alive and active in consciousness. This is a still stronger sign pointing to the final achievement of self-realisation of man.

That a higher development of man is necessary

before he can grasp, and therefore *be*, the way, the 'truth' and the 'life,' is indicated in the sentence following the one quoted, and this explains under what conditions it is true in actual fact. "But he is only so when he grasps his whole individuality firmly, and, by the force of his awakened spiritual will, recognises this individuality as not himself, but that thing which he has with pain created for his own use, and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to the life beyond individuality. When he knows that for this his wonderful complex, separated life exists, then, indeed, and then only, he is upon the way."

This gives the necessary and sufficient condition for man to transcend his 'individuality,' to master its obstacles and limitations. He must "awaken his spiritual will" and by its force lift himself high in consciousness so that he can see and recognise it from a higher point of view, when it is fully exposed to his sight.

It should be noted that there are several meanings in statements of *Light on the Path*. In the one which interests us most the 'individuality' represents the lower self, or personality; to transcend this the man must gain the powers of consciousness of his causal body. This is very difficult to do but he can make approaches to this goal by frequent efforts of will, aspiration and thought power. And even though he may be as yet unable to *be* the 'way,' he can live as if he were, and this attitude and thought prepares the way for the fuller and the final realisation.

C. S.

THE FLOWERING OF LIFE

Evolution takes place in two distinct ways at the same time, and yet they are bound together. Looked at from the side of matter we are interested in the forms; and the tracing of their relations, the watching of their unfolding, of their growth from the simple to the complex, has held the attention and claimed the efforts of some of the world's most earnest workers,—the scientists.

But we like to place emphasis on the life side of evolution and to think of its flowering time. For we believe that the life ever builds the form, though we admit that the form may limit and cramp the life.

In each of the great kingdoms of life in nature that we see about us, and find apparently rather distinctly marked off from each other, the life reaches its flowering time. In the mineral the precious gems may be regarded as the fruit of the long ages of the evolving form and life. Ruskin has, perhaps, written with more enthusiasm about them than anyone else.

The life must leave the mineral kingdom at this point after having created the dazzling glory of color and form that we find displayed in a chaplet of gems.

Passing on into the vegetable kingdom there is for life another long process of rising from simple, lowly forms to its flowering stage there. It is not quite so easy to find the culmination of its work in this kingdom, but we like to think of certain majestic trees, of fragrant roses, and of other sturdy plants as representing the acme of life's habitation in that kingdom.

Then another transition takes place and we see a new kingdom arising—the animal. This kingdom reaches its flowering in some of the domesticated animals and “beasts of burden.” The story of the service of the dogs in the late war is one that touches our hearts and a strong appeal has gone forth because of this, that there shall be no more torture of dogs by vivisection.

The next step is—man. Life has gained a tremendous leap in its knowledge of the use of matter when it can begin to function as intellect in man. To see the long stage that it has run in this new kingdom is not so hard, for we have the great races of men with their sub-divisions and many minor variations all about us now. The reincarnating life takes on a new phase of operation in this last kingdom, and the individual lasts, over life after life, until its flowering time comes as superman, the Adept who is perfected man.

This is the brief outline that one should hold in mind if he seeks to understand the many forms of nature that he sees about him.

“And what are forms?

Fair garments, plain or rich, and fitting close
Or flying looselier, warmed but by the heart
Within them, moved but by the living limbs,
And cast aside, when old, for newer forms?”

Pauline Trueblood.

MR. COMFORT AND REINCARNATION

In a small book brought out at Christmas-tide for the inner circle of his readers, Will Levington Comfort speaks of the vast debt he owes to occult teachings in his quest for wisdom. Commenting on a meeting with four people he says:

"It transpired that the whole four had made the inevitable turning from the old to the new under the influence of one author—Marie Corelli; *The Romance of Two Worlds* having turned the trick in three cases. The point is too big for comment. I have sat under the art-lamps and criticized Marie Corelli's sort of art; but of late I'm interested in the art that whips thousands of lives out of the old and into the new. Mostly this turning point involves Theosophy, Christian Science, or New Thought. . . Still I didn't know anything about the thing explicitly called Reincarnation until James Barr, a brother of Robert Barr, told me I was writing it. Reincarnation was a thing to whisper down town in those days (Detroit, 1900) . . . He gave me a letter to a theosophical lodge, and I went to a meeting that same night. . . I thought of course I was going into some spiritist seance, but when I finally got in I found a group of serious and friendly people talking about God in a new way and very much interested and genial about it—not at all cracked.

. Now I am not a theosophist—in fact many good theosophists think I have gone far astray of late—but I took a deep drink of what they had twenty years ago and found it good. Theosophy is the study of God, mainly from an Asiatic viewpoint, and it flooded into me like a heavy spring rain

over a dry river-bed; and with it came one of the big moments of amazement of life. . I had been reading all my life—many thousands of books—and yet I had never touched anything like this. Here were Besant, Sinnett, Leadbeater—three who could write, and they had a new language, intonation, fauna and flora. If they had written badly I should have been able to hold on to myself; but when I found them capable of style, yet capable of forgetting it, and at the same time opening up Asia as my two journeys there had not done by any means. I had to let go—they had me off my feet.”

The “Nine Great Little Books” mentioned by Mr. Comfort are: *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*; *The Imitation of Christ*; *The Bhagavad Gita*; *The Voice of the Silence*; *The Impersonal Life*; *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*; *Leaves of Grass*; *Light on the Path*; and *Towards Democracy*. Those who have studied the ancient wisdom to a fair extent will agree that these books are most valuable.

Frances J. Yates.



GOD ONLY

Thou hast stood in the Sun, Oh Pilgrim;
Thou knowest that Sun is thou.
Thou hast stood in the Moon, Oh Pilgrim;
Thou knowest that Moon is thou.

Thou hast stood in the ALL, Oh Pilgrim;
Thou knowest that ALL is I.

But what of the shadow, Oh Pilgrim?
The shadow between them and Me?
The shadow that holdeth the darkness;
The shadow that is naught of Me?

Wouldst thou leave them in darkness, Oh Pilgrim?
Whilst thou passest to Light and Me?
'Tis thou who may wait in the darkness
Till all my children may come to Me.

'Tis thou who may rend the darkness
And show all the Light that is I,—
Thou, who will work in the shadows,
That all my children may live in Me.

And this is thy work, Oh Pilgrim,—
The work I have given to thee;
For thou hast chosen, Oh Pilgrim,
To lead back my children to me.

Mrs. Edna C. Abbott.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH REPORT

One of the members of the *Legion* sends us a number of extracts dealing with reincarnation, taken from the report of the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church, 1920, in which all Bishops of the Anglican Communion, American included, took part. The member believes that if the Church did not begin to inquire into reincarnation "I should think it very remiss and unwise; because it is taking sufficient hold on a few people here and there in congregations of the Church to introduce the necessary leaven to make that useful body 'sit up and take notice.' I give a few quotations which may interest you . "

It is the twin doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma in which theosophy begins to come into more or less conflict with the Christian faith. The Doctrine of Reincarnation seems to us both philosophically and scientifically unsound. . . But our concern is rather to insist that this doctrine which theosophists preach as a lost element of Christianity can only be found in the New Testament by an arbitrary and artificial exegesis, that in its theoretical explanation leaves apparently no place for conscious continuity of personality or of personal relationships, that in its practical working it tends to destroy both perseverance and sympathy. The doctrine of Karma, or the law of consequence—namely that the quantitative karma must be worked off gradually in this or some future existence—evacuates forgiveness of all spiritual reality. A doctrine which drives its exponents to describe Christ's absolution of the penitent as a mere announcement that his karma is exhausted is the very negation of any conception of divine forgiveness.

"In closing the report the Committee earnestly urges all Churchmen to make a full and reverent study of the Bible, Creed and Sacraments, before leaving them unstudied for other paths of learn-

ing. I think the report encouraging, on the whole. The Anglican Church is representative, through its leaders of the thoughtful, reverent, scholarly type of mind, rather conservative, weighing things carefully, and not running off on a new tangent frequently. The Roman Church certainly does discourage—yes, forbid, speculation. I see good in all forms of religion, and as to the loss of memory from life to life it seems a merciful provision to my intellect although sometimes to my human spirit it seems a hardship. For well I know if I could remember the many things which I must have done in past lives I would be off for the insane asylum. This one life worries me enough, with its past record of mistakes, ineptitude and sins of omission and commission. We can be very sure that the Wise Ones know best how we should come along.”

REINCARNATION—ITS PROOF

We are often asked, “What are the proofs that reincarnation is a fact in nature?”

Many reasons for reincarnation at once spring into our minds. It gives a man time and opportunity to learn and become all that he wishes to be and to know. No matter how slow his growth, how hard and long the road of learning, he will in time attain. It brings justice into the scheme of things and accounts for many of the happenings in life that otherwise seem erratic, capricious and imperious. Believing in reincarnation a man can travel the road of life with courage, assurance and self-respect.

But all this comes only with the acceptance of the idea of reincarnation and karma and is no proof. Until a man becomes conscious in his own soul so that he can recall the past for himself, there is no real proof for him. There are those who have already attained this stage of development and they have passed on the word of hope and good cheer to us who would learn of the Law. This actual, objective seeing of one's own past lives is the real proof of reincarnation,—others are but partial or incomplete.

Pauline Trueblood.



KNOWLEDGE

Under the caption "Why We Know More Than Our Brains Can Digest.", Charles Gray Shaw, Ph. D., Professor of Philosophy, New York University, presents an article in the *New York American*, Sunday, June 22, 1919, from which I quote the following:

The human brain apparently is on the point of protesting that it is suffering as suffers an over-loaded stomach. Against the befogging influence of alcohol we have legislated in an abrupt, prohibitory way. Shall we find it necessary to save the brain from too much thinking as we have saved it from too much drinking?

When work becomes excessive in hours and severity, workingmen strike; suppose students and scholars were to consider the very plausible idea that there is too much knowledge in the world; would not a mental strike be just and worth while? It is quite impossible to give an inventory of the intellect; to fill out a sheet with all the mental assets of the race would be more difficult than

it must be for the multi-millionaire to put down in symbolic figures just what he owns, just how much income he receives per annum. There is a sense in which there is too much wealth, not with all, perhaps, but with some; and there is no doubt that there is too much knowledge in the brain of mankind generally.

Without attempting for a moment to aid and abet illiteracy, one can easily come to and proclaim the practical conclusion that man to-day knows too much for his brains. The brain is arranged in such a way as to do something more than receive impressions from the world, which latter has for us tens of thousands of sensations; it is the business of the brain to retain impressions, as also to react upon them in ways suitable and profitable.

In all our mental getting, we have been possessed of the notion that it is quantity of knowledge which is the principal thing. A fact is a fact; one fact is as good as another, hence the more facts we have the more knowledge we possess. Hence school children have a colporteur's library under their puny arms, colleges print longer and longer curriculums, libraries install more and more shelves. The time when one brain like that of Aristotle or Bacon could encompass about all the knowledge there was has long since passed away. New sciences have come into being, old ones have been sub-divided, specialization has become the invariable rule.

In the midst of all this, it is the same brain in the same limited skull which must set up an attitude toward knowledge as a whole, and that brain seems about to strike, to insist that there has been an overproduction in the wares of the intellect. We have knowledge, but it is too big for the brain we carry around with us.

Too much knowledge in the world! Too much knowledge in the brain of mankind generally! Can such a thing be possible? I do not think so, and I am sure that Professor Shaw does not believe it literally.

What is knowledge? The best definition the dictionary gives is, "In strict sense, the clear and

certain apprehension of truth." Can there be too much of that in the world? Impossible, for truth is simple and never complex, and no mind sufficiently trained to apprehend it can possibly get an overdose.

Something is wrong, however, or Professor Shaw would not have written that article. What then is the trouble?

The trouble is that brains are being stuffed with all kinds of so-called "knowledge," instead of only that kind which is given in the definition "in strict sense, as the clear and certain apprehension of truth, that is to say, *true knowledge*."

Let us consider as an example, the basis of all knowledge, the fundamental of fundamentals which supports all that is within man's ken, namely, *a true understanding of the cosmos, its immutable laws, and its relation to man*; and what do we find? We find that painstaking scientists are continually discovering important facts which do not always fit in with accepted theories, and cause much perplexity and waste of thought and energy. We find, for instance, that our planets travel with greatly diminished speed for each one further out from the sun, a condition in absolute conflict with the nebular theory of origin of the system, according to which the speeds should be reversed. We find further, by characteristics as revealed by telescope and spectroscope, that the inner planets are the oldest and the outer ones the youngest, again in conflict with the nebular theory, in which the outer ones, being cast off first, should be the oldest.

Accordingly scientists are beginning to reject the nebular theory, and are searching for another

theory of origin with which the facts will fit, but not finding one they invent more or less plausible reasons why the facts are as they are, but they never just fit in right.

Why are we unable to think out a theory of origin that will fit the facts? Shall I tell you what is blocking the way? It is the fact that we are limiting our thinking by the assumption that the solar system *had an origin*; and so long as scientists, and their institutions and colleges, cling to this idea, so long will man be compelled to carry an overload of "knowledge" regarding this matter that is not *true knowledge*.

There is a small but growing number of thinkers who have arrived at the conclusion that solar systems, as systems, never originated but have always existed, and that the destruction of planets in the sun, their volatilization into ether, and the reforming of new planets out of this ether, provide the only changes that go on within the systems, except those incidental to planetary evolution, vegetation and life. The solar system being a vast expanse of ether, its central gravitational point is under such tremendous pressure as to form a point of intense heat, an imperishable ball of fire or sun, which can never die, any more than it could ever have had an origin. For thinkers working with this basic fundamental no cosmic problem is perplexing, and as all astronomic discoveries fit in with this theory, the knowledge stored in their brains on this subject does not overstrain their intellect, and they have ample capacity for more.

I have but scratched the surface in presenting this example. A great many more could be pre-

sented did space permit, and in many lines of human endeavor, which would prove conclusively that if we would pack the human brain only with *true knowledge* we would never get an overload, unless, indeed, we should aim at detail specialization in every field of research, a task manifestly impossible for one individual.

Let us now consider a field in which the reincarnationist is at home. If we are to accept all the so-called "truths" we get from the church we would have to accept as fact that man, body and soul, is a new creation at one birth, and that the body dies but the soul lives on forever as a discarnate spirit; and there is no end to the thought and speculation necessary to understand the working out of man's destiny along these lines. But the reincarnationist who has not accepted his belief purely on faith, but rather on materialistic reasoning, recognizing the real truth, that he is not a new creation from his birth but that he has always existed; and recognizing also that he has lived over and over again in repeated incarnations, and has made evolution from one incarnation to another; realizes that there is a terminus beyond which he need not particularly exert himself in this matter, for he knows all that is necessary for him to know, namely, *that he is immortal*; not in an indeterminate sort of way as a spirit in the skies, but as a living soul and body as often as he can reincarnate through affinitive human junction. He carries with him no mental junk.

William W. Weitling.

URANUS THE AWAKENER

"Astrology interested us," writes Emerson, "because it tied man to the system. Instead of an isolated beggar, the farthest star felt him, and he felt the star. However rash and however falsified by pretenders and traders in it, the hint was true and divine, the soul's avowal of its large relations, and that climate, century, and remote natures as well as near, are part of its biography."

The more we study the science of the stars, the more wonderful appears our intimate relation to them; the more interesting and instructive becomes the tracing of the effect which each individual planet has in our development. The study of the character of a planet becomes almost a personal thing: we feel that we get glimpses of the personality of the god whose physical body that planet is. By means of this sympathetic research do we not more definitely attract the vibrations of the planetary beings, and accentuate their influence upon us, thus accelerating our evolution? It seems to me that this must be the case.

Uranus (or Herschel, as he is called by some astrologers) is a planet of most wonderful and mysterious nature. It is described by astrologers as the "Awakener." He is the god of change, he strives to break up conditions which have become stagnant, no longer affording the soul opportunity for normal advance. He seems to be the direct agent of the karma of the more aspiring, progressive egos, those who have reached the point in their growth when they long to throw off the tyranny of the lower senses, and of selfish,

personal feelings. And, however much our lower self yearns to remain in familiar conditions, seeing no happiness in the new, Uranus, this Mentor who seems to say, like Hamlet, "I must be cruel only to be kind," ever applies the spur to urge us onward and ever upward, the moment he sees that we have advanced to the place where we can react to his high vibrations.

So, when the student finds, in either a birth or a progressed horoscope, the planet Uranus in significant position therein, he may conclude that the owner of that horoscope is a candidate for notable advancement in his present incarnation. In the birth horoscope it means that this unrelenting benefactor will take advantage of the man's karmic obligations to compel him up a stony hill-road of progress, whether he will or no. Rebel he may, and probably will, but through sorrow and bereavement, if need be, his spiritual eyes will be opened. If Uranus is found prominent in the progressed horoscope, especially if situated on the ascendent, this holds good, also, in the natal figure, as being the far more powerful position,) the native will be affected only so far as he has sufficient will-power and wisdom to work with its evolutionary vibrations and is capable of building on foundations laid in his present incarnation.

The attitude of the lower self toward the effects of Uranus is very beautifully expressed by Emerson that I cannot refrain from closing this brief study with his words, quoted from the essay on "Compensation:"

"We cannot part from our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only

go out that archangels may come in. We are idolaters of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in to-day to rival or re-create that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent, where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover and nerve us again. . . . But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, 'Up and onward forevermore!' We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the New; and so we walk with averted eyes, like those monsters who look backward."

"And yet," continues Emerson, "the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding after long intervals of time. . It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances, and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener, is made the banyan of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men."

So might Uranus speak, should he deign to proclaim his philosophy to humanity.

Helen G. Crawford.

BLACKWOOD AS A REINCARNATIONIST

Algernon Blackwood has been giving to the world volume after volume of the most fascinating and convincing presentations of the laws of karma and reincarnation. These works are cast in artistic and beautiful fiction, as well they might be, for the English critic Hilaire Belloc has said that Blackwood is the greatest living English writer. Under such a master's hand the ancient laws of Justice and Rebirth appeal directly and unerringly through this vivid medium. The great interest that students of karma and reincarnation have always felt in his stories is further heightened by the fact that he said recently in a letter that his story "Sand" in the volume *Pan's Garden* "was based, like all my tales, on a real experience," and again of "The Desert Episode" in the *Day and Night Stories*: "this story was also based on a real experience—that is, I know the characters, both now, of course, 'dead.'" On page 109 in that volume (*Day and Night Stories*) he writes, "Death, therefore, was the great revealer of life, without it none could realize that they are alive"—which reincarnationists know to be true as it postulates the necessity for rebirth.

It would be futile to try to collect or quote all the specific references to karma and reincarnation which abound in his writings for they are the soul and fabric of all of them. In everything that he has ever written the keen student can find, to quote his letter once more, "the conception, for one thing, of Justice in all life's details, and of the comforting idea of reincarnation."

His books will richly repay careful reading for their appeal is to that surest instinct, intuition, which takes the reader to that place where only music and poetry and the divine certitudes of philosophy speak and illumine.

Henry L. Belmont.

FIELD NOTES

It has been a great satisfaction to learn that Mr. Percy W. Bell, Representative for New Zealand, who took part in the great war, is again actively at work and hopes to establish many centers in the island dominion.

Mrs. Louise van der Hell, the Representative of the *Legion* for Dutch-speaking countries, has sailed for Australia where she expects to reside for one or two years. In her absence the *Legion* work at the headquarters will be taken care of by Mrs. Schuurman. The membership in Holland and the Dutch East Indies is now strong and the work is steadily progressing.

A Group has just been formed in Nashville, Tenn., with six charter members. It is hoped that this group will contact many people with the teachings of reincarnation and karma.

The *Legion* has complete sets of literature at thirty cents, containing much valuable information for students as well as beginners. The price of this literature has never been raised. Likewise the subscription price for REINCARNATION, fifty cents for twelve separate copies, has always remained the same. Have you placed a subscription in your public library? It would help.

Subscribers to the magazine are not members of the *Legion* unless a special application blank has been filled out and sent to Headquarters. Every subscriber who has not a certificate of membership may ask to be enrolled.